

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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BOEHLERT-MARKEY AMENDMENT TO CLOSE THE LIGHT TRUCK LOOPHOLE

National Academy Study Reaffirms Need to Increase Automobile Fuel Economy

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA) today urged the adoption of his amendment to close the light truck loophole permanently by setting a combined fleet CAFE standard of 27.5 mpg by model year 2007, and to revise the dual-fueled vehicle CAFE credit system to ensure that credits are given only when alternative fuels are actually used. Mr. Markey, along with Mr. Boehlert (R-NY), plan to offer the amendment to the Energy bill on the House Floor later this week.

"The National Academy of Sciences has spoken again," said Markey. "It said in 1992 that raising fuel economy standards for both cars and light trucks could be done, and it has said so again in its latest report. There are no more excuses, no more studies, and no more delay tactics - the time to save consumers money, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and reduce levels of harmful pollutants is NOW."

Closing the light truck loophole:

The National Academy of Sciences 2001 study states that "The distinction between a car for personal use and a truck for work use/cargo transport has broken down, initially with minivans, and more recently with sport utility vehicles and "cross-over" vehicles. The car/truck distinction has been stretched well beyond the original purpose." *The Amendment sets a combined fleet CAFE standard of 26 mpg by model year 2005, and a combined fleet CAFE standard of 27.5 mpg by model year 2007.*

Closing the dual-fueled vehicle loophole:

The National Academy of Sciences 2001 report states "The provision creating extra credits for multi-fuel vehicles has had, if any, a negative effect on fuel economy, petroleum consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and cost. These vehicles seldom use any fuel other than gasoline, yet enable automakers to increase their production of less fuel efficient vehicles." *The Amendment ensures that credits are given only when the vehicles actually use ethanol, providing a true incentive for the use of alternative fuels.*

Automobile fuel economy standards were originally passed in 1975, and the result was a dramatic increase in the efficiency of new car fleets. However, the standards have been capped at 27.5 mpg for new cars since 1986, and the exemption of SUVs and minivans from this standard has led to a steady decline in the combined fleet-wide average ever since. Current fleet-wide averages have fallen to just 24.6 mpg, the lowest level since 1981.

"We are the world's technological giant," said Markey, "It is now beyond reason to argue that Americans lack the technological capacity to make significant savings through fuel economy standards."

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